



Inner Conflicts in "Happening" Novel by Annie Ernaux: An Overview of Literary Psychology

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to describe the inner conflict of the main character in the novel "Happening" by Annie Ernaux and the main character's attitude in dealing with his inner conflict through literary psychology. Happening is one of Annie Ernaux's best autobiographies that describes her very spectacular journey when she was a 23 year old who underwent an abortion in a country where it was still illegal and considered shameful. She wrote her story from when she was a university student. She is a student who are really enthusiastic, intelligent, has dreams and strong determination to achieve all her dreams. She chose to continue her education for a better life, she wanted to get out of the middle class life which gave her many limitations. During the summer on July, she felt it was the beginning of the lowest point in her life, she discovered the fact that she was pregnant. It was as if her world and everything in it collapsed and hit her right then and there. The results of this research are a psychological picture of the bad situation she felt before she was pregnant, when she was pregnant, her persistence in having an abortion in a place that was still illegal in order to return to her life and the psychological impact she experienced after the abortion, how she continued her life and achieved her dreams. Throughout the novel, we can observe that Annie is a brave young woman who never allows failure happen to her, when she does not find a solution to her problem, she diligently creates her own solution. She has written about her life story in her own way and brings the readers to feel the emotions and sensations she experienced in the story.

Keywords: Inner conflicts, Psychology, Abortion, Annie Ernaux

1. INTRODUCTION

After publishing her first novel in 1974, *Cleaned Out*, Annie Ernaux continued to write to explore not only her own life experiences but also those of her generation, her parents, and other women's issues, even other people's stories that interested her. The main themes he has raised through her work for more than four decades are related to: social inequality, the body and sexuality, time and memory which she has expressed in her writing. In Ernaux's work, even the most personal and intimate experiences, whether they be grief, shame, passion, illegal abortion, illness, or the perception of time are always understood from the perspective of the social and cultural context as something experienced by others in which they occur. [1]

Annie Ernaux was born on September 1, 1940. Born from a working class background, to a comfortable and more advanced life, the only way she knew was through education. At first she was doubtful, but he united the

determination within her to continue her education in the field of literature which made her successful in getting a high degree in modern literature. In 2022, she was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature by the Swedish Academy for the "courage and clinical acumen" of her work, Ernaux being the 17th woman to be awarded the prize since a French woman first in 1901 did so. Trough her relaxed and striking writing style, she documented all her memories in the form of written works. She has written many books and received many awards for her works including: *A Man's Place*, *A Girl's Story*, *Possession*, *A Woman's Story*, *Happening*, *I Remain in the Dark* ect..

Happening (2001), by Annie Ernaux talks about the tribulations and trials that she en-counterred on pregnant by accident while exploring her romantic love story and sexual side; and her journey to face and survive while the abortion in a place where it's not only deemed illegal but also shameful. Her parents only care about her academic career, and she hasn't someone that truly care about her.

She had to find her own solution for her problem that she faced. Some of her friends or even the doctor could not give her any solution, moreover they just give her another problem. So, she needs to take her own decision for hers. *Happening* describes Annie's unprecedented emotions during this extremely important part of her life and her pure determination combined with stubbornness to not let this incident determine her life forever.

Literature is a form of creative artistic work whose object is humans and their lives using language as a medium. As a creative art that utilizes humans and all aspects of their lives, literature is not just a medium for conveying ideas, theories or systems of human thought. [2] Psychologists believe that personality to some extent influences genetic elements. The way we grow and develop is greatly influenced by our environment and life experiences. According to Sigmund Freud, personality is formed early in our lives, driven primarily by our experiences of needs and pleasures. [3]

Psychology comes from the Greek word. The word "psyche" means soul and "logos" means knowledge. Abstractly, psychology does not study a person's soul or mental state, but this is limited to the manifestation and expression of the soul or mentality which is a behavior and process, so that psychology can be interpreted as a science that studies the processes and behavior of a person's soul or mental state. [4]

Literature and psychology both discuss about human life. Literature discusses humans with all their problems and is presented in the form of complete texts in the form of personalities, traits, character and personal lives that accompany them. Psychology studies human life by studying their nature or personality with the support of the surrounding environment. Thus, it can be concluded that literature and psychology are sciences that study the image of humans and their psychology. The relationship between literature and psychology in its development is presented in a review of the field of literature which is often called literary psychology. So it can be said that literary psychology is a study that studies the psychological reflections of a person which can be depicted in a character and presented in such a way by the author in the story, so that the reader can feel the psychological problems contained in the story.

The elements contained in literary works are a reflection of the universe which depicts the true condition of humanity and its society. Therefore, analyzing literary works using psychoanalysis is the right way to understand human behaviour. [5] With this it can be understood that emotional influences and social conditions are the aim of psychological-based literature studies themselves. [6]

Semi, [7] the psychological approach is an approach that starts from the assumption that literary works always discuss events in human life. To see and know humans more deeply and further requires psychology.

In 1923, one of the leading psychologists, Freud, introduced three structural models in psychological analysis, namely Id, Ego, and Super Ego. This new structure does not change the previous structure, but

complements the existing one, namely regarding a person's mental image which is connected to the function and purpose of something to be expressed or known [8]. This theory can be applied to literary works by using pure parts as material for consideration in examining a person's character and personality.

According to Carl Gustav Jung [9], there are three psychological concepts, namely personality, emotional and spiritual functions. These three things are a combination that can represent the mental values that exist within a person. Personality is divided into two, namely conscious and unconscious. Meanwhile, emotional, and spiritual are things that encompass the personality itself. Psychology views humans as unique because they have many different personalities from one individual to another. Jung differentiated the term into two important parts, namely the subconscious and the unconscious.

According to Alfred Adler [10], humans are social creatures and individual creatures. These two things describe the state of human development which is based on the human being himself as well as the influences obtained from the environment and the experiences he has experienced. Adler's theory is individuality itself, where in his theory there are two main drives, namely selfish and social drives. These two things can have a big influence on the development of a person's behavior. In this way, the main driver of a person's behavior can have an impact on one's own lifestyle and creativity. Alfred Adler's theory states that humans are social creatures and therefore all behavior is socially embedded and has social meaning [11]. Adler emphasized the importance of relationships and connecting with other people, including the place where we are, socializing well can have a good developmental impact on a person.

Adler recognized four personality types, such as the learning type, the avoidant type, the ruling type, and the type who likes to help in social environments. It is important to understand these four personality types to understand individual psychology.

This research wants to analyze and discuss the inner conflict that occurs in the main character and how the main character behaves in dealing with this inner conflict through a psychological approach, where psychology discusses human behavior in relation to its environment, how a person grows and develops influenced by the character that is formed by the surrounding environment. The psychological approach is a library research approach that focuses on the psychological aspects contained in a literary work through the characters in a story.

2. METHODOLOGY

Literary works can build a story which includes plot, characterization, setting and theme. This structure is then referred to as the intrinsic element that determines the existence of the work.

The data source for this research was obtained from the *Happening* novel itself. Apart from that, it was also taken from several references in the form of journals

related to literature and psychology which were downloaded from the internet to complete this research.

Data collection techniques in this research were carried out by: (1) reading Annie Ernaux's novel "Happening" repeatedly to understand the story, (2) noting the sentences or dialogues written in the novel, and (3) analyzing the sentences and dialogue that reflects the possible inner conflict of the main character in the novel.

The data analysis technique in this research is a descriptive analysis technique by identifying and then classifying the data (sentences and dialogue) which are analyzed as a manifestation of the inner conflict experienced by the main character in the story and then integrated and connected between the data and theory. The data that had been collected at that time was interpreted by the author using Alfred Adler's theory. Results explained descriptively based on three important stages in the novel: before an accident, while pregnant and after abortion.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research divides the three sections of analyzing and discussion the inner conflict of main character in novel *Happening* by Annie Ernaux, namely the description of the main character's life before an accident, while pregnant and after abortion.

3.1. Before an Accident

Annie lives as a typical student. She is someone who makes friends easily, enjoys watching new films, diligently attends lectures and often spends time with her friends.

But suddenly she was faced with a situation she had never expected before. Born into a working-class family, she had to decide whether she wanted to focus on achieving the academic achievements his parents wanted or follow her dreams of exploring what others her age was explore. Finally, she has made the important decision to explore all things and experience both during her college life. She had a very interesting relationship with her parents who were always very stubborn in achieving her academic goals, so she could never talk to them about her personal life. However, to make them happy, she sometimes visits them on special occasions. She had explored her sexual life with a boy named "P" in Summer, July, she had never imagined that her love could arise in a creation called a human. And this is the beginning of Annie's misfortune that will begin to change her future days.

"I had finished marking my essays. I kept picturing the same blurred scene one Saturday and Sunday in July, the motions of lovemaking, the ejaculation. This scene, buried for months, was the reason for my being here today. I likened the embracing and writing of naked bodies to a dance of death. I felt that the man whom I had half-heart-ily agreed to see again had come all the way from Italy with the

sole purpose of giving me AIDS. Yet I couldn't associate the two: lovemaking, warm skin, and sperm and my Prescence in the waiting room. I couldn.t imagine sex ever being related to anything else." p.10

3.2. While Pregnant

"I waited for my period for a week. I would still hope to see a stain appear: p.13.

However, on her way to the obgyn, she already found out that she was pregnant. Since the diagnosis, even for a moment she had never thought of keeping the baby. She felt that there is a strange thing in her tummy and preferred to call it "that thing". She didn't want to receive the pregnancy condition and thought to terminate the pregnancy and take a big risk by getting abortion in a country where it's totally illegal by the law.

"I am pregnant. It's nightmare". p. 17

"I wrote to P, informing him I was pregnant and had no intention of keeping it".p.18

Her collage life had soon felt so dark. She has no brave to come and meet friends because she felt shame on her condition. She felt very bad and envy to the other woman with their empty wombs. She started to look for the solution for her by looking for a friend who could help and give some advice to her. She confided to her collage friend namely Jean T.

Jaen T. is a married student. Annie disclosed her secret during lunch time hope that she could get some help during that her terrible time. Jean T. was shocked on hearing that news, she thought that Annie is one of the role model students in the university, but now on she is same with the other woman.

"I didn't think Jean T had shown contempt for me. In his mind I had moved on from the girl who might say no to the type who had undoubtedly said yes". p.25.

She really needs a solution for her situation right now, she wants to end her pregnancy soon. But Jean T. looked try to take the advantage to Annie condition by offering to making love with him. Her enthusiasm to get a solution had led her visit an elderly doctor. The doctor had given two injections which hope could help her to lose the baby, but unfortunately those shots that had been injected was to improve the chances of growing a healthy baby in her womb. it was totally wrong.

"One morning, while I was standing in the hall waiting for a lecture to end, the figures of the students around me suddenly broke up into small shiny dots". p 34.

Annie had successfully delivered the baby, her friend, O had helped cut the cord, but she begun losing tremendous of blood, O call the paramedics immediately.

Finally, Annie has found admitted in the hospital for 5 days to cure her hemorrhage.

3.3. After Abortion

“In my student bathroom, I had given birth to both life and death. It was so painful I was clinging to the washbowl. Little did I know it could cost me my life” p.69.

Annie felt a sense of relief after the abortion, but at the same time she also felt an emptiness that she had never felt before. She felt like a different woman now. She no longer feels enthusiastic anymore about new things in his life like before, she will never return to her previous life again after that accident. Every night she thought about that innocent baby, but it was not possible for her to take care for the baby too. She never thought what would happen to her life by raising a baby without a father.

According to Adler, when we are discouraged, we may act unhealthy by competing, withdrawing, or giving up. We will find ways to express ourselves and be able to receive support, respect, and ultimately it can help us feel satisfied and optimistic again. Adlerian theory and practice have proven to be very productive when applied to a person's growth and development. She believes that “a person who behaves badly is a hopeless person” and that helping to feel appreciated is important, and one's competence is often the most effective strategy in dealing with such difficult behavior. Adlerian psychology focuses on a person's efforts to overcome their feelings of inferiority towards others. This feeling of inferiority may stem from a person's position in the family, especially if the experience is feeling like humiliated, a certain physical condition or disability and a lack of social attention towards others.

Annie Ernaux provides strong evidence of the fact that her work provides readers with a view of social class violence. Annie Ernaux stated that writing is not a way to escape reality. On the other hand, not always, this is a salvation. But it is true that, at the same time, for any writer it is a way to escape genre and social class assignments. She shows how she can live and live her life. The path you have taken has provided many different experiences. The bad events he experienced made him act unhealthy and hopeless to the point of almost giving up. However, because of his determination to solve this problem, she was able to get through it all and make peace with her situation even though it ultimately gave her unforgettable memories in her life. In fact, meaning is not determined by the situation, but we determine ourselves based on the meaning we give to the situation.

Annie Ernaux has lived an eventful life filled with many challenges and problems that she endured and faced with courage. She has written many autobiographical books, each of which describes very special chapters in his life. In her book, she describes the joy of going to summer camp and having her first sexual experience, undergoing an illegal abortion, and many other wonderful events in her life. Sometimes she feels there is a difference between her social background and

her current condition. Born into a family of laborers and shopkeepers, she was the first to receive a higher education and thus avoided factory work and trade and at the end of the situation she faced in his life was a stigma of social failure at that time. it feels like the time drag me into these problems for the rest of my life.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that Annie is a brave young woman who never lets failure or lack of help bother her in any way, even when there is no solution, she diligently creates her own solution. In her autobiography, Annie Ernaux is honest and does not try to hide the reality when she was 23 years old and had to undergo called abortion, something that was illegal at the time. This novel describes the birth of extraordinary courage that she did not realize and the loss of a human who had it because she accidentally conceived it, but she could not possibly keep it. She remains candid throughout the book while sharing small details about the number of people who made mistakes during that part of their lives while showing his passionate strength and tenacity to not take no for an answer. Although in the end, she aborted her baby and let the reader enter a very personal part of her life where she describes the process of giving birth in unusual circumstances without being accompanied by anyone relatives with extraordinary pain due to loss, shame, and trauma. She experienced during this process and then in the end she stated that this was one of the lowest points in her life.

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